

Chapter VII

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

An inventory and analysis of the existing housing stock and of factors influencing the development of new housing in the County is important to the preparation of a development plan for Waukesha County. The provision of adequate affordable housing for workers in locations convenient to County employment centers is vitally important to the continued sound social and economic development of the County. Such provision is also critical to achieving reductions in travel demand and in the time and resources spent commuting, as well as to providing an adequate pool of labor near existing and potential job concentrations, thereby enhancing opportunities for economic development.

Accordingly, this chapter provides: 1) an inventory and analysis of the existing housing stock in Waukesha County, 2) a determination of housing needs within the County, with respect to both the resident population and the commuting workforce, 3) a description of local, State, and Federal programs which facilitate the provision of housing in the County, 4) an analysis of the cost of providing new housing in the County, and 5) community zoning regulations which affect the cost of housing in the County.

EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

Information concerning the quantity and characteristics of the existing housing stock is necessary to determine the extent to which that housing stock is able to satisfy the requirements of Waukesha County's growing population and employment base. This section of the chapter accordingly presents information on the quantity and distribution, occupancy status, tenure status, vacancy status, structure type, and cost characteristics of housing in Waukesha County as enumerated in the 1990 U. S. Census of Population and Housing. In addition, historic information is presented for the County, the Region, and the State, as enumerated in the 1950, 1960, 1970, and 1980 U. S. Censuses of Population and Housing, and information is presented for the number of housing units added to the County's housing stock between 1990 and 1995.

Number and Distribution of Housing Units

The U. S. Bureau of the Census classifies, as either housing units or group quarters, all structures which are occupied or are intended for occupancy as living quarters. Housing units are defined as houses, apartments, mobile homes or trailers, groups of rooms, or single rooms which are occupied or intended for occupancy by households as separate living quarters which meet certain specific criteria.¹ A household is, in turn, defined as one or more related or unrelated individuals who occupy a housing unit. Group quarters are institutional or noninstitutional living arrangements such as correctional institutions; halfway houses; juvenile detention centers; nursing homes; psychiatric schools, hospitals, or wards; rooming houses; college dormitories; military quarters; or emergency shelters. Group quarters do not satisfy the U. S. Bureau of the Census definition of a housing unit; therefore, housing information is not provided for such group quarters in this section of the chapter. It should be noted, however, that about 4,650 persons, 3,410 in college dormitories or nursing homes, 740 in juvenile or correctional institutions, and the remainder of 500 in other types of quarters, occupied group quarters in Waukesha County in 1990, representing about 1.5 percent of the total population of the County.

The number of housing units in Waukesha County by civil division, the Region, and the State for the years 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1990 is presented in Table 71. As indicated in Table 71, the number of housing units in the County more than doubled in the past thirty years, increasing from about 47,300 in 1960 to about 110,450 in 1990. The County experienced rates of growth in the number of housing units of 38 percent in the 1960s, 42 percent in the 1970s, and 19 percent in the 1980s, rates

¹According to the 1990 U. S. Bureau of the Census definition, a housing unit exists when the occupants live and eat separately from other persons in the structure and there is either direct access to the unit from outside or through a common hall. Any separate living quarters which meet the above criteria in rooming or boarding houses are classified as housing units, as are entire rooming or boarding houses in which less than ten unrelated persons reside.